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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CONAKRY 000557

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [ASEC](#) [GV](#)

SUBJECT: STRONG REACTIONS TO VISITING HEADS OF STATES'  
MEETING WITH DADIS

Classified By: A/DCM SHANNON CAZEAU FOR REASON 1.4 B AND D

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. Many Embassy contacts are infuriated over remarks made by Senegalese President Wade during a public meeting with Dadis on September 12. Liberian President Sirleaf-Johnson was also present. In typical fashion, the CNDD orchestrated a major demonstration of popular support for Dadis, complete with crowds of women calling for him to run for office. Wade seems to have been widely perceived as having demonstrated support for Dadis and is expected to actively push other ECOWAS heads of state to support Dadis' anticipated presidential bid. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (SBU) Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade and Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf met with CNDD President Moussa Dadis Camara on September 12 in Conakry. In anticipation of the visit, some Embassy contacts said that the two heads of state were coming to try and convince Dadis to refrain from running for office. Others said they were coming as a demonstration of regional support for the military junta. Despite torrential downpours throughout the day, Guineans reportedly came out in droves to participate in a public meeting with the regional heads of state. Contacts shared widely differing views on what the meeting meant and how it was received.

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THE WELCOME COMMITTEE  
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¶3. (C) According to a high-level contact with the Ministry of Security, Wade and Sirleaf-Johnson's aircraft landed at the airport a full fifteen minutes before Dadis' motorcade arrived to greet them. The same contact said that the Government of Guinea had actually paid for the jet fuel to get the two leaders here. Upon arrival, they were greeted by hundreds of women on the tarmac calling for Dadis to run for President. At some point during the visit, Wade and Sirleaf-Johnson reportedly met privately with Dadis, but it is as yet unclear as to when or whether this meeting actually took place.

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WOMEN VOICE SUPPORT FOR DADIS  
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¶4. (SBU) From the airport, the two leaders were escorted to the People's Palace where hundreds of Dadis supporters, mostly women, had gathered. Jeanne Guilavogui, an excellent Embassy contact and young woman leader, spoke on behalf of the gathered women. Reportedly speaking with great passion, she stated that Dadis' candidacy in the 2010 presidential election is necessary to safeguard peace in Guinea, and that he should run so as to demonstrate his unquestionable political legitimacy. She then proceeded to present Dadis with a new boubou (traditional African robe) in case his current garb (a military uniform) proves to be too much of an

impediment.

¶5. (C) When asked about her remarks, Jean Guilavogui told Pol LES on September 14 that the Ministry of Social Affairs had designated her as spokesperson against her will. She claimed that she was reluctant, as a member of civil society, to refuse to read the speech. However, the style and demeanor of her reported delivery did not appear to be those of someone going against personal convictions.

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REACTIONS FROM THE VIP GUESTS  
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¶6. (U) According to internet news site Guinee24, which has consistently demonstrated its pro-CNDD bias, President Sirleaf-Johnson said "I see the women and I know the power of women...As such, I am happy to be here and I have heard the women's message and how they see the future of their country(everywhere in the world, it is the populations that decide the future of their countries and we must respect popular will." Other news outlets reported elements of President Wade's remarks, including a statement that he would speak with the heads of state of ECOWAS and the African Union in order to explain the reality in Guinea.

¶7. (C) A number of contacts took these two heads of states' comments as blatant demonstrations of support for Dadis and the CNDD. An opposition political contact (RPG party) condemned Wade's statement as "deplorable," adding that Wade is actively advising Dadis to pursue his candidacy while planning to convince the international community to accept

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him as such. Youth contacts viewed Wade's behavior as a betrayal since it is clear that he has decided to offer his support to Dadis. Former prime minister turned political leader (FUDEC) Francois Fall emphasized that the Forces Vives does not recognize Wade as a mediator since the International Contact Group is already playing that role.

¶8. (C) Although Johnson-Sirleaf made some statements, contacts focused their displeasure on Wade who many contacts see as meddling in Guinean affairs in order to advance his own interests. Some speculated that Wade's motivations are primarily economic. Contacts claimed that Wade may be looking to "work" the situation to the advantage of Senegalese business interests, including those of his son, Karim Wade. Other contacts said that Wade's motivations are more political and that he is looking to broker a deal in Guinea as he did in Mauritania.

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SUCCESS VERSUS FAILURE  
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¶9. (C) Contacts also disagree on whether the visit was a success or a serious blunder, largely depending upon whether they find themselves in the pro-Dadis or anti-Dadis camps. Interestingly, the high-level contact at the Ministry of Security suggested that the visit was a disaster, beginning with Dadis' failure to receive his guests at the airport upon arrival. Later, the heads of state were supposed to have lunch together, but were instead escorted directly to the airport, which was seen as a major breach in protocol.

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COMMENT  
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¶10. (C) In recent weeks, a number of Embassy contacts have argued that President Wade has his own agenda in Guinea, and that it is inconsistent with that of the ICG and ECOWAS. When he first seized power, Dadis reportedly held the Malian President, Toure, in high regard and viewed him as a role model. However, over the past few months, Dadis seems to be

less and less enamored with Toure, and more and more inclined to express his high regards for Wade, who he has repeatedly said he sees as a father figure. During a press statement on September 9, Dadis also referred to an unspecified cash contribution from Wade.

¶11. (C) During the last ICG meeting, ECOWAS Representative Chambas maintained a strong position and was clearly frustrated with the results of the meeting. It remains to be seen whether Wade's position is divergent with that of ECOWAS or whether he is simply signaling where ECOWAS might go in the weeks and months ahead. Guinea's neighbors may be worried about a possible conflict in Guinea wreaking havoc in the region, and as such, may be starting to think about taking a more cautious position. END COMMENT.  
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